

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BLANTYRE 130

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, RH, MI

SUBJ: BISHOP MUZOREWA COMMENTS ON SITUATION IN RHODESIA

REF: BLANTYRE 129

1. SUMMARY: BISHOP MUZOREWA TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT IN THEIR MEETINGS SMITH REPEATEDLY DECLARES HIS DESIRE FOR SETTLEMENT BUT HAS NOT MOVED ON THE TWO KEY ISSUES--AFRICAN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT AND ENLARGEMENT OF FRANCHISE. ANC IS SEEKING COMPROMISE AND TO THIS END AGREED TO TALKS ON BASIS 1971 AGREEMENT. DESIRE FOR SETTLEMENT IS GROWING AMONG WHITE

ELECTORATE AND SMITH MAY MODIFY HIS STAND IF HE SENSES CHANGE IN VIEWS OF VOTERS. ONE POSSIBILITY IS AGREEMENT BETWEEN ANC AND RHODESIA PARTY. BISHOP NOT ENCOURAGED BY SITUATION BUT INTENDS PERSEVERE IN SEARCH FOR SETTLEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES REPORTED REFTEL, I MET WITH BISHOP MUZOREWA JANUARY 28 FOR ABOUT ONE HOUR FOR CUP OF TEA IN HOTEL LOBBY. INITIALLY WE WERE IN COMPANY OF AFRICAN BISHOPS AND CONFIDENTIAL

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OFFICERS FROM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF AFRICA ASSEMBLED IN BLANTYRE FOR CHURCH CONFERENCE. SUBSEQUENTLY WE WITHDREW FOR PRIVATE CHAT. BISHOP SEEMED READY TO TALK WITH US REP. AND REPEATEDLY THANKED EMBASSY AND USG FOR ASSISTANCE GIVEN RHODESIAN

STUDENTS SEEKING ADMISSION TO US. IN RESPONSE TO GENERAL COMMENT ON MY PART THAT WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN HIS VIEWS ON SITUATION IN RHODESIA, HE HAD FOLLOWING TO SAY.

3. HMG HAS MADE KNOWN TO BOTH ANC AND SMITH THAT IF THEY COULD REACH SETTLEMENT IT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO HMG. HMG HAS BROUGHT UDI ISSUE TO UN AND NEEDS SUCH AGREEMENT TO FACILITATE RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS WITH RHODESIA WHICH IT EAGERLY DESIRES.

4. AS WE KNEW ANC AND SMITH REGIME ARE NOW IN CONTACT. IT TOOK LONG TIME TO BRING SMITH TO THIS POINT SO PRESENT DISCUSSIONS CAN BE DESCRIBED AS ADVANCE.

5. IN THEIR MEETINGS SMITH IS EMPHATIC IN REPEATING OVER AND OVER HIS OWN DESIRE FOR SETTLEMENT; IT IS NEEDED BY COUNTRY; IT IS IN BEST INTERESTS OF COUNTRY. HOWEVER, ON SPECIFICS SMITH IS ONLY WILLING TO TALK ABOUT FRINGE THINGS, WAYS TO DRESS UP 1971 AGREEMENT.

6. THE TWO ESSENTIAL ISSUES TO BISHOP ARE:

A. MEANINGFUL REPRESENTATION BY AFRICANS IN PARLIAMENT AND IN DIRECTION OF GOVERNMENT;

B. MODIFICATION OF FRANCHISE TO INCLUDE QUALIFIED AFRICANS. IT IS RIDICULOUS TO EXCLUDE EDUCATED AFRICANS SUCH AS TEACHERS, NURSES POLICEMEN, ETC., JUST BECAUSE THEY DO NOT EARN SPECIFIED MINIMUM INCOME. THESE PEOPLE CERTAINLY KNOW WHAT IS GOOD FOR COUNTRY. ON TWO KEY ISSUES SMITH "HAS MOVED NOT ONE IOTA." HE HAS MADE NO PROPOSALS.

7. ANC HAS SOUGHT COMPROMISE. INSTEAD OF SAYING 1971 SETTLEMENT IS COMPLETELY OUT, ANC SAYS LETS TALK ABOUT IT. DISCUSSIONS CAN BE ON BASIS OF SMITH-ALEC DOUGLAS-HOME AGREEMENT. AFRICANS ARE NOT DEMANDING CONTROL NOW OVER GOVERNMENT.

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8. IF BOTH PARTIES COMPROMISE, MOVE TO MIDDLE GROUND, AGREEMENT WOULD BE POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, BISHOPNLL "NOT ENCOURAGED" OVER PROSPECTS.

9. SMITH APPARENTLY THINKS THAT BY STANDING FIRM ANC CAN BE BROUGHT TO ACCEPT 1971 AGREEMENT WITH ONLY FRINGE MODIFICATIONS AND WITHOUT CHANGES ON TWO BASIC ISSUES. WITH SUCH AN AGREEMENT HMG AND OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD RECOGNIZE RHODESIA AND SMITH WOULD HAVE HIS UDI. ANC WILL NOT AGREE.

10. TO SMITH THE ELECTORATE IS "NEXT TO GOD." HE DOES HAVE PROBLEM WITH RIGHT-WINGERS. HOWEVER, INCREASING NUMBER OF WHITES WANT SETTLEMENT, BUSINESSMEN HURT BY SANCTIONS, FARMERS

WORRIED ABOUT SECURITY. SMITH ALSO WANTS ONE BUT SO FAR ONLY ON HIS TERMS.

11. IF SMITH COMES TO BELIEVE OPINION OF ELECTORATE IS CHANGING HE MAY MODIFY HIS STAND. THERE ARE SIGNS WHITES ARE TURNING AGAINST RHODESIA FRONT, FOR EXAMPLE, LETTERS TO NEWSPAPERS. ANC IS WATCHING FOR RESULTS OF TWO BI-ELECTIONS IN ABOUT 14 DAYS WHERE RHODESIA PARTY IS CHALLENGING RHODESIA FRONT.

12. RHODESIA PARTY IS ATTRACTING MORE AND MORE WHITES DESPITE SETBACK OCCASIONED BY WALKWOUTS. IT IS COMING TO REPRESENT ESTABLISHMENT AND INTELLECTUALS AND HAS MANY YOUNG PEOPLE. MANY WHITES WERE ASTONISHED BY RHODESIA PARTY AND ANC WERE ABLE TO AGREE ON SET OF 12 PRINCIPLES. THEY HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THE TWO KEY ISSUES. SHOULD ANC AND RHODESIA PARTY SUCCEED IN REACHING AGREEMENT ON SETTLEMENT, ELECTORATE (WHITE) WOULD BE OVERJOYED AND RHODESIA PARTY IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES COULD EASILY DEFEAT RHODESIA FRONT. (COMMENT: BISHOP'S EYES LIT UP OVER THIS POSSIBILITY IN WHICH HE APPEARS TO SEE SOME HOPE)

13. AFRICANS ARE DETERMINED TO STAFD FAST. THEY ARE SUFFERING FROM LOSS OF JOBS BECAUSE OF SANCTIONS. HOWEVER, STREAMS OF AFRICANS COME TO HIM SAYING THIS IS OUR CONTRIBUTION TO STRUGGLE. IF ECONOMIC PRESSURES ARE NEEDED, LET THEM CONTINUE.

14. THERE ARE INCREASING AFRICAN PRESSURES FROM OUTSIDE BY
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THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN SOLUTION

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